

Abele Wants to Work with MPS

Written by Milwaukee County, Melissa Baldauff
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MILWAUKEE – In an interview that aired over the weekend on WISN's UpFront with Mike Gousha, Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele again reaffirmed his commitment to working with Milwaukee Public Schools to implement the Opportunity Schools and Partnership Program in a way that is, "as pro-MPS as possible."

Read WISN's recap of the interview below, or [view online here](#) .

Recap of "Abele wants to work with MPS" on UpFront with Mike Gousha:

Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele said he wants to work with leaders of the Milwaukee Public Schools to turn around some struggling schools, as required by a new state law.

The Opportunity Schools and Partnership Program was written by state Sen. Alberta Darling, R-River Hills, and state Rep. Dale Kooyenga, R-Brookfield. It calls for a few struggling MPS schools to be placed under the control of the county executive, and his appointed commissioner. Abele chose the Mequon-Thiensville superintendent, Dr. Demond Means, to lead the Opportunity Schools program.

But so far, the program has received a chilly response from the leaders of Milwaukee schools.

Appearing Sunday on "UPFRONT with Mike Gousha," Abele said he and Means have tried to address the district's concerns about how the program would work.

Abele said the plan he and Means have proposed would allow teachers in the Opportunity Schools program to remain MPS teachers, stay in their union and keep their salaries and benefits. The program would also start with just one school, and eventually return it to MPS, Abele said.

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"We have proposed a way of implementing it that is as pro-MPS as possible," Abele said.

To date, MPS leaders have not agreed to negotiate an intergovernmental agreement with the county for operation of an OSPP school, or even meet with Abele and Means, according to Abele's office.

Abele said it is not an option to just ignore the law and hope the authors of it will go away.

"It is not the case, for anybody who is considering this issue right now, that we can simply say 'We don't want to do anything. Pass.' That is not an option we have," Abele said.

"We have to do something," he said. "If we don't do this, I think you might see something more heavy-handed and honestly, I'm concerned about that," he said.